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Using Competency Mapping to Improve Online Education

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Using Competency Mapping to Improve Online Education

Presenters:

Kathy Adler, Associate Dean - College of Graduate Health Studies, A.T. Still University

Mary-Katherine Smith, Department Chair - Masters of Public Health, A.T. Still University

Sue McDaniel, Instructional Designer-College of Graduate Health Studies, A.T. Still University

David Line, Associate Professor-College of Graduate Health Studies, A.T. Still University

Kathy Adler, Associate Dean for Academics and Assessment at the College of Graduate Health Studies, A.T. Still University, kadler@atsu.edu Dr. Adler has been teaching and evaluating courses at A.T. Still University since 2006. She brings her 25 years of assessment experience in healthcare administration to streamline the data collection and assessment processes to online education, providing essential information to key accrediting bodies.

Mary-Katherine Smith, Associate Professor & Chair, Public Health, A.T. Still University, mksmith@atsu.edu Dr. Smith has been teaching and designing online courses since 2007 and completed the CEPH professional accreditation process at A.T. Still University. She is involved with online faculty evaluation, program and competency mapping and assessment and regularly presents on the topic.

Carolyn “Sue” McDaniel, Instructional Designer, A.T. Still University, csmdaniel@atsu.edu Sue has been involved with instructional design as ATSU for many years. In addition to bringing specialties in adult education, she is also involved with competency mapping, and the Iowa Distance Education Association. She presents regularly on distance education, distance learning, and techniques for adult learners in the online courseroom.

David Line, Associate Professor, Public Health, A.T. Still University, davidline@atsu.edu Dr. Line has been teaching and designing courses at A.T. Still University and the University of New England since 2009. He is on the A.T. Still University College of Graduate Health Studies Curriculum Committee and Faculty Council. He has written on the topic of online course evaluation, faculty evaluation, online faculty promotion, and program mapping.

Type of presentation: Best Practice

Abstract:

The growth of online education has coincided with the resurgence in Competency Based Education (CBE). This trend has introduced new opportunities to assess student progress and program outcomes. This interactive session explores ways of getting the most out of CBE in the online world. **Mapping, improving students**

Description:

Determining and aligning program and learning outcomes has become an important part of validating online education. To address this issue, Competency Based Education (CBE) has gained support to ensure program outcomes are defined, as well as to align with credentialing requirements. Concurrent to the integration of CBE, program mapping has been instituted to illustrate alignment between program strategic plans and their curriculum. Expanding the use of CBE and program mapping to improving student performance is an opportunity which is gaining favor in higher education. This is especially true since CBE's evolution from the hard sciences now includes social agendas of academic institutions. This emphasis is also highlighted by the inclusion of CBE in accreditation expectations from organizations such as the Higher Learning Commission. Program and course alignment has increased in popularity as a result of certification requirements as put forth by Quality Matters.

The format of distance education and the use of learning management systems, such as Blackboard and Canvas, allow for the expanded use of course and program mapping. The most standard format for online courses is to develop the course and preload it into the learning management system. The course develop process creates a more consistent course which lends itself to CBE and mapping. This is because learning activities, assignments, and discussions can be selected in advance and reutilized over multiple sections and sessions. Developing courses ahead of time, and standardizing their expectations, enables the linking and mapping of these expectations to defined competencies with a higher level of confidence than previously available. This increased reliability and validity, while creating opportunities to use these same structures to improve learning opportunities. Learning activities which do not contribute to stated outcomes can be scaled back, while; learning modalities which increase outcomes can be increased. Finally, learning outcomes which are not captured in the competencies will be identified. This can lead to formative evaluation discussions.

From this session chairs will increase their awareness of CBE and the use mapping to improve student performance. To do this, the presentation will review the best practices of how to incorporate CBE into a new or existing program. It will also explore how to use the mapping of competencies to improve student outcomes. Participants will be encouraged to review their perspectives on how they use competencies and mapping to improve student performance.

They will also have a better understanding of how to use online tools to reach course and program objectives. Finally, attendees will gain an awareness of how course development timelines and demands impact content.

The foundation of the seminar formatted session will include a review of a sample syllabus compiled from select courses. Audience members will then test their critical abilities on additional parts of the sample.